

December 21, 2007

RE: Municipalities with a Special Order for Using the *International Fire Code*®

As you may be aware, the Department of Commerce recently adopted changes to Wisconsin's Fire Prevention Code, which is chapter Comm 14 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. These changes are expected to become effective on March 1, 2008 – and primarily consist of replacing the currently incorporated 2000 edition of the National Fire Protection Association's NFPA 1, *Fire Prevention Code*, with the 2006 edition of NFPA 1.

The March 1, 2008, changes to Comm 14 will also terminate all special orders that the Department issued previously for authorizing municipalities to use the 2000 edition of the *International Fire Code*® in lieu of the 2000 edition of NFPA 1 and subchapter III of the current edition of chapter Comm 14.

However, the changes to Comm 14 will allow municipalities to adopt, by ordinance, requirements of the 2006 edition of the *International Fire Code* and any additional requirements, that, in total, are equivalent to Comm 14 and its inclusion of the 2006 edition of NFPA 1. Under these changes to Comm 14, a municipality will not need to obtain a special order from the Department for this use of the 2006 edition of the IFC. Since a special order will not be issued, the Department does not expect to review any such local requirements prior to their adoption, to determine whether they are equivalent to Comm 14 and NFPA 1. Fire departments that serve municipalities which choose to substitute 2006 IFC requirements for 2006 NFPA 1 requirements may want to pursue training from vendors who are knowledgeable about the 2006 IFC.

Please note that under these changes to Comm 14, a municipality could selectively apply requirements from both the 2006 IFC and the 2006 NFPA 1 only if the municipality has an ordinance which is not in conflict with Comm 14 and which clearly allows use of both of those codes.

Please also note that as usual, a municipality could adopt requirements that are more restrictive than Comm 14, provided they do not apply to design and construction of either multifamily dwellings or one- and two-family dwellings.

Also as usual, a municipality could not apply the above, locally adopted requirements to state-owned facilities.

Sincerely,

Robert G. DuPont, Director
Program Development Bureau

pc: Fire Chief